The Correct Rank of John N. Womack, Sr.

In many family trees and on many genealogy websites, John N. Womack, Sr. of Washington County, Alabama, is shown with a rank of Major. Unfortunately, this appears to be incorrect. The source being cited for this rank indicates that a John Womack was a Major in the 20th Regiment of the 6th Brigade of the 3rd Division[1] from 10 Dec 1822 to 14 May 1825. But, this is not our John Womack.

The Alabama Militia Law of 1820 organized the Alabama militia into divisions, brigades, and regiments with the following items of relevance to our discussion:

> ... the third Division shall be composed of the counties of ... Marengo ... the fourth Division shall be composed of the counties of ... Washington ... which Divisions shall form nine Brigades ... the sixth of the counties of ... Marengo ... the ninth, of the counties of ... Washington ... The Regiments shall be designated and numbered as follows ... Marengo, twenty ... Washington, thirty one ...

So, the John Womack described above would have been a resident of Marengo County. Our John Womack is believed to have been a resident of Washington County from at least 1805 until his death in 1848. If we want to research the ultimate rank of our John Womack, we need to turn in the cited resource to the regiment for Washington County.

Before doing so, let us lay some groundwork. John is first seen in military service as a Lieutenant on 08 May 1809 in the 6th Regiment[2] (prior to the 1820 militia reorganization). He is later promoted to Captain[2] on 30 Mar 1810 from which he resigned[2] on 02 Mar 1815. (Therefore, John is considered to have served in the War of 1812 as a Captain.) From this source, it is easy to conclude that John's military service ended with the rank of Captain. But, if we return to the first cited source covering time periods after 1820, we learn that the story continues.

Using the Alabama Militia Law of 1820 excerpt above, we need to look in the 31st Regiment of the 9th Brigade of the 4th Division to find military service for those who lived in Washington County. On doing so, we find that John apparently re-enlisted as Captain[3] on 06 May 1825. He is later promoted to Lieutenant Colonel[4] on 04 Jul 1826, somehow skipping the rank of Major. He appears to have finally resigned from service[4] on 09 May 1828.

And so we have the final answer. It appears that John N. Womack, Sr. of Washington County, Alabama, ultimately reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Alabama militia from 1826 to 1828.

written by Kevin P. Thompson, 08 Apr 2025

References

[1] Alabama, Register of Officers, Vol. 2, 1820-1832, Alabama Adjutant General's Office, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL, pg. 257.

[2] Matte, Jacqueline Anderson, The History of Washington County, First County in Alabama, Washington County Historical Society, 1982. Page 436.

[3] Alabama, Register of Officers, Vol. 2, 1820-1832, Alabama Adjutant General's Office, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL, pg. 436.

[4] Ibid, pg. 435.